

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

FEB 06 2012
OMB No. 1024-0018



191

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" on the appropriate line or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name ZALESKY, FRANK E. AND KATIE (CHERVENY), HOUSE
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 802 9TH AVENUE N/A not for publication
city or town BELLE PLAINE N/A vicinity
state IOWA code IA county BENTON code 011 zip code 52208

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this (☒ nomination
_ request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
(☒ meets _ does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant (_ nationally
_ statewide ☒ locally) (_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Billy H. Beall, Director OSHPD 2/20/12
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property (_ meets _ does not meet) the National Register criteria. (_ See continuation sheet for additional
comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- ☒ entered in the National Register.
 - _ See continuation sheet.
 - ☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
 - _ See continuation sheet
 - ☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register
 - ☐ removed from the National
Register.
 - ☐ Other, (Explain)

Don
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Don V. Beall

4-10-12

Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House
Name of Property

Benton County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property **Category of Property**
(Check as many lines as apply) (Check only one line)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object |

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING
DOMESTIC/SECONDARY STRUCTURE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/SECOND EMPIRE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/LIMESTONE
walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT
other _____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Section number 7 Page 1

CFN-259-1116

Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Site Description

The Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny) Zalesky House, located at 802 9th Avenue, is situated on part of Lot 7, Block 8 of Hutton's 2nd Addition in Belle Plaine, Benton County, Iowa. The property is located in a historically residential neighborhood, five blocks south of the Belle Plaine commercial center.

The Zalesky House is sited on a .32-acre lot on the northwest corner of the intersection of 9th Avenue and 8th Street, with its façade facing east. The building is bounded on the west and on the north by a grassy yard, with a one-story, ca.1980 house on the north being the closest neighbor (the house is built on land that was historically part of the original Zalesky House parcel). A one-story, wood frame garage dating to ca.1940 is located at the rear of the lot, adjacent to the alley; the garage is considered a non-contributing resource as it post-dates the period of significance. A public sidewalk runs the perimeter of the block, connecting to private walkways that provide access to the house's primary entrance on the east and to a secondary entrance on the south.

The residential neighborhood surrounding the Zalesky House stretches north to the line of the Chicago & North Western Railroad, located just south of the community's historic commercial corridor on 12th Street. A variety of stylistic influences are represented in the neighborhood, many reflecting Late Victorian era styles. In its high style expression, the Zalesky House stands alone.

Building Description

The Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny) Zalesky House is a ca.1872 construction that exemplifies the Second Empire style in American domestic architecture. Comparatively modest in scale, the building utilizes the design details specific to a residence of the style and the construction period. Its high style and quality of execution stand it as an exceptional specimen of the Second Empire style and as the most architecturally significant residence in Belle Plaine.

Exterior

The Zalesky House is a two-story brick building constructed on a limestone foundation. The house is comprised of the original, two-story ca.1872 house, and two additions. Although difficult to date precisely, research evidence suggests the house was constructed ca.1872. Physical evidence suggests that, not long after the house was constructed, a one-story brick addition was made to the rear (ca. 1875). A second addition, matching the first in scale, form, materials, and decorative details was constructed ca.1881. The one-story additions, while in their utilitarian appearance stand in stark contrast to the original house, are nearly seamless from one another; only a variation in the stone foundation and a seam in the brick coursing suggest two different constructions.

The original portion of the house is a two-story brick construction on a limestone foundation. The original house takes advantage of a modestly elevated site to underscore the regal bearing of the Second Empire style. As described by various authors, the Second Empire style is actually a description of a roof form, that being the mansard. The profile of the double-pitched mansard can have some variation between examples, ranging from flat to curving. In the Zalesky House, the outer roof pitch is straight and very steep, with the rooftop being nearly flat. The roof ridges are

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rimmed with iron cresting. Typical of the style, roof dormers are present. The Zalesky House, which is sited on a corner, incorporates dormers on the primary elevations, those being the façade (east) and the south.

Beneath the mansard roof, a house in the Second Empire style assumes the stylistic details of various period styles. Most commonly, that is the Italianate and such is the case in the Zalesky House. The use of an essentially cubical form, a bracketed eave with a paneled frieze, tall and narrow, double-hung windows with segmental arched headers and substantial hoods, a veranda-like porch (absent a balustrade) with post forms common to the Italianate, a double-wide entrance door with an arched transom, and an overall sense of verticality are all stylistic devices typical of the Italianate and all have been utilized in the Zalesky House. Further, tweaked to the Second Empire, the overhang of the eave is more shallow than that of a purely Italianate house, a two-story bay on the south utilizes paired windows with a single hood, the mansard roof sports iron cresting, and the dormers rise to a height that creates a feeling of a centralized pavilion - a common feature in Second Empire residences of a larger scale. An unusual and curious detail is the wing-like form of the dormer roofs, which defies clear precedent.

Like the original building, the additions to the house are brick - the first being constructed on a limestone foundation and the second on a brick foundation. Both additions are one story with a flat roof. Although the rear section of the Zalesky House does not utilize the more overt stylistic elements of the original house, windows are consistent in scale and form, including the use of a segmented arch header that, in the addition, is created using two courses of bricks turned on their side. Overall, the house's rear section is decidedly more utilitarian in appearance with the sole nod to decorative device being a simple cornice of brick laid in a diamond shape set within panels. The section's diminished scale, flat roof, and brick cornice stand in stark contrast with the larger, more sophisticated Second Empire house. In fact, the rear section reads as a truer reflection of the ethnic traditions and immigrant mentality of the Zalesky family and of the space's historic occupant, Ladimir Klacel, than does the French-inspired design of the original house.

The simple rectangular form of the rear section is broken on the south elevation, where the second addition is wider than the first, creating a recessed area that is currently used as a patio. The patio is of poured concrete with a non-historic iron railing and is accessed via three steps from the private walkway. Two entrances to the house's addition are accessed from the patio. The first enters into the ca.1875 addition and the second into that of ca.1880, which supports the assertion that the second addition (with its private entrance) was constructed to house Ladimir Klacel.

Interior Description

The interior of the Zalesky House reflects the plan of its Period of Significance (ca. 1872-1929), with no significant alteration of the historic plan made with the exception of the change to the upper story hallway, which will be reversed in the pending rehabilitation. Further, the majority of the interior historic finish materials remain intact.

The original section of the Zalesky House first floor is comprised of the front hallway with the staircase to the upper story, the formal parlor, the dining room, and the sitting room. The front hallway retains the historic double-door with its molding, and transom, as well as the paneled wainscoting, and the plaster walls and ceiling. The L-shaped staircase is fully intact with a wide handrail and turned spindles. Paneled wainscoting covers the wall along the staircase and a small, arched window is located at the turn in the staircase. The hallway floors and the staircase treads are currently carpeted.

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The formal parlor is located at the front (east) of the house, directly off the hallway and near the main entrance. The room retains most of its historic wood trim, which is typical of machine-made trim work of the late 19th century. The room is absent a crown molding. Ceilings remain full-height with plaster walls and ceiling intact. A non-historic fireplace insert and mantel have been added to the room (it will be replaced with a more historically appropriate fireplace). The room is presently carpeted.

The dining room is entered from either the formal parlor or the front hallway. The room is the largest on the main floor, its sense of scale heightened by the bay on the south. This space, and that of the sitting room adjacent, utilize wood trim of a profile more naïve and less refined than that in the formal parlor. Its character is perhaps a truer reflection of the original owner and his Bohemian roots than is the machine-made trim in the formal parlor and is likely indicative of the historical division between public and private spaces. In the dining room, non-historic wainscoting has been added, the top element adapted from the former baseboard. Like the formal parlor, there is no crown molding in the dining room and the floors are carpeted. Plaster walls and ceiling remain.

A small sitting room is located off the dining room. The historic function of the room has yet to be verified. Today, a large, non-historic fireplace dominates the room's east wall (it will be replaced with a more historically appropriate fireplace). Although the crown molding is absent in this room, the baseboard remains intact and can serve as a pattern for the replacement of that in the dining room. An ornate, Victorian screen insert is located in the cased opening between the dining room and the sitting room. The room's floor is carpeted and the walls and ceiling retain their plaster.

The upper story of the original house features three bedrooms. Each bedroom retains its plaster and wood trim (except a crown). Like the main floor, the upper story is carpeted. Like the dining room over which it is located, the main bedroom features a bay window, which creates a bright and open space.

As noted, the previous owner altered the upper story hallway for the purpose of opening the attic for use. This involved the construction of a staircase that utilized historic materials salvaged from a house of a similar construction period. The present owner will reverse the alteration, closing off the attic and returning the hallway to its historic configuration.

The rear additions to the original house are currently divided into a kitchen, one bedroom, one small sitting room (den), and a bathroom. Although the specific plan of the additions remains to be verified, the space in the ca.1880 addition (the bedroom and the sitting room) appears to be historic.

The kitchen has seen the greatest amount of alteration, with non-historic cupboards and appliances arranged in the large open room. A window on the north wall was diminished in size to accommodate placement of the cupboards. Retention of the historic plaster should be confirmed, but floors are covered in non-historic flooring. The wood trim around doors and windows remains intact. A transitional space between the additions accommodates a narrow hall and utility closet on the south and the bathroom on the north. A stained glass window in the south wall of the hallway is not original to the house. The sitting room and bedroom adjoin at the rear (west) of the addition. For an undetermined reason, the bedroom is raised by one step. Both rooms are small in scale with ceilings considerably lower than that of the original house. Further, both retain their historic finishes, including wood trim (except the crown).

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Chervený), House, Benton County, Iowa.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

The Frank E. and Katie (Chervený) Zalesky House retains a very high level of historic integrity as it relates to all seven aspects of integrity: location, setting, association, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

Because the Zalesky House remains on its original site, the level of integrity as it relates to location is excellent. The house is sited on a large corner lot, the size of which, although diminished by its sub-division, remains larger than is typical of the neighborhood. The retention of the original site, which when the house was constructed was minimally developed, provides a reference to the scale of the town at the time of the house's construction.

The integrity of the Zalesky House's setting and association are also very high. As one of the earliest, and likely the earliest house in this historic residential neighborhood, the house's setting within that neighborhood represents the starting point of a continuum of residential construction. The proximity of the house's location to the community's historic commercial district is significant in its association with Frank Zalesky and the Zalesky meat market that was located on the Main Street from 1868 through ca.1911.

As a resource considered eligible for registration under Criterion C, integrity of design, workmanship, and materials are of paramount concern and the integrity of each of those is very high. The present appearance of the house form is that of the determined Period of Significance, with the original house and both additions constructed between ca.1875 and ca.1881. No further additions have been made to the building. Exterior details and materials remain nearly fully intact, significant in that their retention underscores the historic design and architectural style. This is particularly true in regard to the mansard roof and dormers, two-story bay on the south, window forms, bracketed cornice, and roof cresting. The retention of the historic materials, specifically the brick, limestone, and iron cresting, are significant elements referencing the period of construction and architectural style. The present property owners indicate that the previous owner replaced some, if not all, of the limestone sills. Replacement was made with like materials, with a minimal adverse impact to the building's integrity. Although some window openings of the house are presently boarded (most obviously the three upper windows of the façade), the openings with hoods and sills remain intact.

Likewise, the house's interior retains a very high level of integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. The only significant interior alterations involve the remodeling of the kitchen space and the opening of the floor between the second floor and the attic - an alteration that will be reversed by the present property owner. Otherwise, the house's floor plan appears to remain wholly intact and representative of residential interior plans of its construction era.

The building also retains a high level of integrity as it relates to feeling. Because the Zalesky House retains a very high level of integrity as it relates to the previous qualities, visitors from the Period of Significance would readily recognize the building today and experience it much as they would have historically.

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FUTURE PLANS

The current property owners are in the planning stages of an historic rehabilitation of the Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny) Zalesky House. The owners arranged with the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office for a TAN (Technical Assistance Network) visit by a preservation architect who made general recommendations regarding rehabilitation of the house. Subsequently, the services of the architect have been engaged for the historic rehabilitation. As noted, the property owners intend to reverse the alteration of the upper story to attic connection. In addition, non-historic fireplaces in the formal parlor and in the sitting room will be removed and the kitchen will be rehabilitated to both increase functionality and to return a sense of the historic appearance (within the limits of modern requirements). It is important to note that the present owners are highly sensitive to the historic significance of the Zalesky House and are committed to its preservation. Further, they are very supportive of the community development projects underway in Belle Plaine and aim to dovetail the rehabilitation of the Zalesky House to the town's present efforts to recognize and preserve its historic resources.

Zalesky, and Katie (Cherveny), House
Name of Property

Benton County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" on all the lines that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ETHNIC HERITAGE/ EUROPEAN

Period of Significance

CA. 1872-1929

Significant Dates

CA. 1872

CA. 1875

CA. 1881

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

Narrative Statement of Significance - (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliography References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ previous determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Record
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historical Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny) Zalesky House, placed in service in ca.1872, is locally eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The resource is considered significant as the embodiment of the Second Empire style in residential architecture.

The Second Empire style was popular in American residential design from 1860-1880, particularly in urban areas of the northeastern and Midwestern states. In contrast to the historicized romanticism of the Italianate and Gothic Revivals styles of that period, the Second Empire style was inspired by the latest in French building design, giving it a decidedly modern appeal. In its application to American residential architecture, the Second Empire style has been described as essentially a roof form, rather than a style of house because multiple styles of the period, when topped by a mansard roof, may be identified as Second Empire style. In the case of the Zalesky House, the influence of the Italianate is obvious.

In the state of Iowa, seventy-two dwellings defined as Second Empire are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The vast majority of the Register listed buildings are located in communities considerably larger than Belle Plaine, and often on the state's eastern boundary, that portion of the state having been settled first, with large-scale communities developing early in the state's history. The early prosperity of such communities remains reflected in its historic architecture. No National Register listed residential dwellings in the Second Empire style are located in Benton County. Further, only two Benton County resources in the style have been formally identified; one of those two is the Frank E. Zalesky House.

The Zalesky House presents the hallmark stylistic elements that define it as a building in the Second Empire style. Specifically, the house, in addition to the style-defining mansard roof, is vertically oriented, and utilizes roof dormers, a verandah-like porch, a bracketed cornice, a two-story bay, roof cresting, and windows with heavy hoods. Most notably, while the building (in contrast to others of the state's Second Empire houses such as the Hubbell House in Des Moines) is relatively modest in scale, the Zalesky House's high-style, early construction date, and high level of historic integrity stand it in stark contrast to Belle Plaine's historic residential stock in general. As a result, the house is widely recognized by local residents as the town's most significant residential resource.

The Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny) Zalesky House is locally eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The resource is considered significant in its association with the history of Belle Plaine's Bohemian population, particularly as the property of Frank E. Zalesky, who followed a recognized pattern of progress representative of Iowa's Bohemian population. The Zalesky House is a physical manifestation of that pattern.

Frank (Frantisek) E. Zalesky immigrated to the United States from Sucha (in what is now the Czech Republic) in 1865, arriving in Belle Plaine in 1868. His wife, Katie (Katerina) Cherveny, was also a Bohemian immigrant. In his new community, Frank Zalesky became a prosperous businessman and community leader. He and his family were one of a Bohemian population that, in the late 1890s, comprised approximately seven-percent of the town's residents. In the family's impact on Belle Plaine's commercial success, in their work ethic (evidenced in Frank Zalesky's longtime success in business), and in the early construction of their home on 9th Avenue, the Zalesky family was the embodiment of the Bohemian immigrant as described by historians of the Czecho-Slovak contributions to the growth and development of nearby Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

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Further, the Zalesky House was the final home to the Bohemian philosopher Frantisek Ladimir Klacel. Klacel, having immigrated to the United States in 1869, spent the final months of his life in the care of the Zalesky family. Although Klacel's impact on this country's Bohemian population is questioned in some quarters, his philosophy and teaching are well-known, well-documented, and he has been memorialized in his homeland as well as in his adopted country. Klacel, who died in Belle Plaine in 1882, is buried in the town's Oak Hill Cemetery. Klacel's habitation of the Zalesky House underscores the significance of the resource's association with the history of the town's Bohemian population.

The Period of Significance for the Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny) Zalesky House is ca.1872-1929, the year the property was placed in service through the year in which Frank E. Zalesky was associated with the house. The Significant Dates are ca.1872, the approximate year the house was placed in service, ca. 1875, the approximate date of the first addition, and ca.1881, the approximate year of the second addition, which was likely constructed to house Ladimir Klacel.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The town of Belle Plaine was laid out in 1860 on the northern bank of the Iowa River in Benton County, some fifty miles west of Cedar Rapids in Linn County. The town site was chosen both for its topographical advantages and in anticipation of the coming railroad, which was extended from Cedar Rapids to Belle Plaine in 1863. For many years, the railroad was the underpinning of the city's economic health; Belle Plaine thrived with the railroad and suffered when service diminished. Further, the presence of the railroad created the need for a large workforce and was a factor in the presence of the immigrant population that settled in the community. Many Bohemian immigrants worked for the railroad while others, like Frank Zalesky, became businessmen in Belle Plaine's commercial district.

Belle Plaine was incorporated in 1868 and from its beginning the advantages of being a railroad town were apparent in the commercial district. With the convenience of transporting goods via the railroad and the town's distance from other communities of any size, Belle Plaine was the primary supplier to the large farming community that surrounded it and the scale and composition of the town's commercial sector reflected that status. In the fall of 1869, the Belle Plaine commercial district (concentrated along what is now 12th Street between 7th and 9th Avenues) boasted eight dry goods stores, nine groceries, four clothing stores, three boot and shoe stores, three drug stores, three hardware stores, two furniture stores, two tailor shops, four millinery shops, two jewelers, three lumber yards, one book store, two livery stables, one flouring-mill, two harness shops, one photograph gallery, two carriage shops, one musical instrument and sewing machine agency, four saloons, three hotels, one bakery, one bank, one newspaper, two grain elevators, five lawyers, four physicians, one dentist, and two meat markets – one of which was that owned by Frank E. Zalesky.¹

Frank (Frantisek) E. Zalesky (1845-1929) immigrated to the United States from Sucha (in what is now the Czech Republic) in 1865, coming to Belle Plaine in June of 1868. Soon after arriving, Zalesky rented a storefront on the Main Street and, with his father (Frank Sr.) and brother (Joseph), established a meat market in his new community. The new business joined two existing meat markets, Bennett & Hardy and Amos Werner (also started in 1868).

¹ *Belle Plaine Centennial* [Belle Plaine, IA: Historical Committee, 1962], 19.

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Zalesky's market was a small venture to start, but the business grew quickly over the ensuing years. In 1878 Frank E., Joseph, and a second brother, Wencil, ran the meat market; Frank Sr. was farming forty acres on section 27, southeast of Belle Plaine in that year. By 1887 Frank E. Zalesky had bought out the interests of his family, making him the sole proprietor.² In 1897 Zalesky employed a fellow Czech, Joseph Trezek. In that same year, Benda & Dohnolek, both of whom were Bohemian immigrants, operated the town's other meat market on "west Main Street."³

Frank Zalesky's brother Joseph moved to Cedar Rapids and died there in 1883 and his father died in Belle Plaine in 1891; both are buried in Belle Plaine's Oak Hill Cemetery. Wencil Zalesky, having completed an apprenticeship to his brother, worked at the meat market until moving to Cedar Rapids in 1880. After living for a short period in Cedar Rapids, Wencil returned to the Belle Plaine meat market where he again worked with Frank E. until 1889, at which time he went to work at a Cedar Rapids brewery. In 1911 Wencil was an agent for the Anheuser Busch Brewing Company for the Cedar Rapids district.⁴ Wencil died in 1926 and is buried in the family plot in Oak Hill Cemetery.

Frank E. Zalesky was married to Katie (Katerina) Chervený⁵ in March of 1870. Katie was also born in Bohemia and came to America in 1858. The couple had four children, George (1872), Emma [or Annie] (1874), Mary (1876-1884), and Julia (1879-1957). A small tombstone in the town cemetery indicates the couple had a fifth child, Frank, who died in 1871 at just five months of age. George Zalesky worked in the family meat market from 1887-1900.⁶

By the 1890s the Belle Plaine commercial corridor was fully developed along 12th Street (formerly 1st Street, aka Main Street), with one- and two-story, commercial buildings running from what is now 7th Avenue on the west to just past 9th Avenue on the east. In 1894 F.E. Zalesky's meat market was located in the east side of a doublewide storefront, the address for which was then 249 1st Street. The building was a two-story, brick block that housed commercial businesses in the storefront level and offices on the second. On the evening of July 28, 1894 a blacksmith's fiery spark set a bale of hay afire to start a blaze that resulted in the near complete destruction of the Belle Plaine commercial district. In total some eighty-two buildings covering almost two full blocks and valued at \$500,000 were lost to the fire or purposely razed in the effort to stem its spread. Zalesky's meat market was a complete loss. Despite the devastating blow, the community quickly rallied and businessmen, including Frank Zalesky, were soon rebuilding.⁷ A two-story, doublewide, brick business block replaced that which was lost in the fire and Zalesky's meat market remained in that storefront through Frank's retirement in ca.1911. The building stands today as a contributing resource to the potential National Register "Belle Plaine Main Street Historic District," the nomination of which is currently in progress.

² *Belle Plaine Centennial*, 19.

³ *Belle Plaine Biographical Dictionary 1897* [Belle Plaine, IA: Belle Plaine Historical Society, 1897], 21.

⁴ *History of Linn County, Iowa: From Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*, Vol 2, [Chicago: The Pioneer Publishing Company, 1911], 701.

⁵ The spelling of Mrs. Zalesky's name is alternately Katy, Katie, Katherine, Cathrine and Katerina. She is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Belle Plaine, her tombstone indicating she died on June 24, 1884. Frank E. Zalesky is buried next to his wife with his parents (Frank E., Sr. and Emma/Anna Stajr Zalesky), infant son Frank, and his brothers Joseph and Wencil.

⁶ *Belle Plaine Centennial*, 302.

⁷ *Pioneer Recollection* [Vinton, IA: The Historical Publishing Company, 1941], 165.

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Local accounts ascribe Frank E. Zalesky's ability to anticipate the desires of his customers and his promptness to deliver the best meats as the secret to his business success. Zalesky's prowess as a businessman extended to ventures in real estate and other enterprises. He served as a city trustee for seven years and was a member of the C.S.P.S. (Czecho-Slovak Protective Society), which was a fraternal organization established by Czech freethinkers.⁸ After his retirement from the meat market business, Zalesky remained active in the community as the vice-president of the First National Bank. Local accounts refer to him as "among the well-to-do and responsible citizens."⁹

Although limited research has been conducted about the Czech population of Benton County, and even less on that immigrant group in Belle Plaine, the story of Czech emigration to neighboring Linn County, and in Cedar Rapids in particular, is well documented. Like immigrants from many areas, Czechs fled their native land in the wake of political persecution; they came to America from regions then known as Bohemia and Moravia, seeking both freedom of expression and opportunity. These areas of Europe were under the control of the Hapsburg Empire until the First World War.¹⁰ Many of the earliest Czech immigrants traveled first as far as Chicago where a community of some 200,000 developed. From Chicago they often moved on to other communities, drawn by the familiarity of a common language and traditions in towns with growing Bohemian populations. In addition to Cedar Rapids, significant Czech communities grew up in Spillville and Iowa City.

Although the earliest Czech immigrants came to Linn County in 1852-1853, the period between 1866 (after the Prussian war in Austria) and 1880 marks the greatest influx of Czech immigrants to Linn County. By 1910, 8,500 of Cedar Rapids' approximate 37,500 residents were of Bohemian origin, and the city had become known as the "The Bohemian Athens of America." An additional 2,500 Czech immigrants settled in other areas of Linn County. These settlers came directly from their own country, as well as from other areas within the United States.¹¹

Although not formally analyzed, evidence of the historical Bohemian population in Belle Plaine exists in a variety of unofficial records, including the headstones at the local Oak Hill Cemetery where the names of Zalesky, Drahos, Andrie, Vosatka, Benda, Benish, Hadima, Dohnalek, Doupnik, Cerny, Frondel, Huska, Kadlec, Kostomlatsky, Kubella, Suchey, Mekulacky, Mosnat, Nichols, Reese, Formanek, and Robenskya offer an indication of the presence of a substantial Bohemian population in the community.¹² The 1897 *Belle Plaine Biographical Directory* (compiled by the Belle Plaine Historical Society in 2003) provides one representative view of the town's ethnic demographic. In that year, an unscientific count indicates that residents of Bohemian descent comprised nearly seven-percent of the estimated 3,376 population.

⁸ *Portrait and Biographical Album of Benton County, Iowa*, [Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1887], 282-283.

⁹ *History of Linn County, Iowa: From Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*, Vol 2, [Chicago: The Pioneer Publishing Company, 1911], 701 and Loren Horton, "Czech Culture in the Midwest." Electronic article at <http://www.k12connections.ipvt.org/community/SupportDocs.rtf>. Accessed May 17, 2011.

¹⁰ Loren Horton.

¹¹ Luther Brewer and Barthinius L. Wick, *History of Linn County, Iowa: From Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*, Vol 1, [Chicago: The Pioneer Publishing Company, 1911], 123.

¹² http://iagenweb.org/Benton/cem_trans/oak_hill.htm. Accessed April 23, 2011.

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As noted, Frank Zalesky was a member of the C.S.P.S., which was a fraternal organization founded by the American freethinkers. The freethinkers began in Bohemia in the 1870s as a radical, anti-Hapsburg and anti-church movement. The group believed in reason rather than faith as the guide to human choice and behavior. Once in the United States, many Czech immigrants split from the Catholic Church, to them a symbol of the oppressive Hapsburg Empire left behind.¹³ Not all Freethinkers were former Catholics – some were Protestants and some atheistic, but most simply eschewed the construct of formal religion.¹⁴ The freethinker movement grew in scope and impact, taking on a creed that delineates their beliefs about mankind, nature and the universe. The Freethinkers commonly published weekly journals that emphasized Slavonic culture and Czech language.¹⁵

Linn County histories describe that county's Czech immigrants as possessing many attributes that made them good citizens, among them being the ability to adapt to existing conditions, a sense of industry and economy, and a strong work ethic that commonly counted them among a community's leading merchants. In Belle Plaine of 1897, members of the Bohemian population were engaged in a variety of occupations ranging from commercial businesses like the town's two meat markets (F.E. Zalesky, meat market and Benda & Dohnolek, butchers) and Kratoska's Restaurant, to professionals like J.J. Mosnat, attorney. It was the railroad, however, that employed the vast majority of the town's Bohemian men.

In Linn County the Bohemian immigrants are further described as lovers of the home, with the desire to own their own house being the driving force behind their economy and industry. As Brewer notes, "The Bohemians are not renters." To that end, all members of the family – men, women, and children alike – worked to bring in the greatest income for the quick purchase of a home. The involvement of several members of the Zalesky family in the Belle Plaine meat market (including Frank's son George, who worked for his father from age 15 to 18) indicates that the Zaleskys subscribed to that practice. While some Bohemian immigrants bought an existing house, others commonly purchased land and erected a dwelling to suit their needs and desires.¹⁶

As for Frank Zalesky, he celebrated his success in business by constructing the most architecturally notable house in Belle Plaine. In its physical prominence and high style, the house's exterior is a reflection of Zalesky's success as a local businessman. In a revealing juxtaposition, the naive sensibility expressed in the rear additions and in the details of the house's interior reflects a more modest expression of his life and Bohemian roots. Judging from the architectural style employed in the original house, the timeline of Zalesky's business success in Belle Plaine, and the platting of Hutton's Second Addition, it appears the house was constructed in ca.1872.

The architect/builder of the Zalesky House remains unidentified, although the level of its quality of design suggests the hand of an architect at work. Belle Plaine had no known practicing architect/builders during the period of construction. However, Cedar Rapids, at a distance of just fifty miles and readily accessible by railroad, provided a source for someone seeking the skill of an architect. That city's Bohemian population (some of whom were relatives of Frank Zalesky) provided a means of contact with that larger population and with a specific architect. Architects

¹³ Loren Horton.

¹⁴ Oxford Junction Genealogical website. http://www.oxfordjctgenealogy.com/main/?page_id=176. Accessed May 17, 2011.

¹⁵ Oxford Junction genealogical website.

¹⁶ Brewer, 123.

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known to be in practice in Cedar Rapids during the period in which the Zalesky House was constructed include W.A. Fulkerson (in practice ca.1883-ca.1909), Joseph Wilson Smith (died in 1894), and E.L. Caulkin. The well-known Cedar Rapids firm of Josselyn & Taylor did not establish that partnership until 1882. Another, well-known nineteenth century Cedar Rapids architect, Charles A. Dieman, worked as a draftsman for Josselyn & Taylor from ca.1892-1896 at which time he opened his own firm - too late to have been involved in the design of the Zalesky House.¹⁷

As for the additions to the original house, the building itself suggests that Zalesky added on to the main structure within a few years after its construction (ca.1875). A second addition pre-dates the May of 1881 arrival of the Bohemian philosopher, Frantisek Ladimir Klacel. It appears that Frank Zalesky was in communication with Klacel by the late 1870s (Klacel having come to the U.S. in 1869, with a June of 1881 letter indicating Zalesky had invited Klacel to Belle Plaine on four previous occasions). According to Klacel's letters, an immigrant family occupied the "house" when he arrived and he was required to stay with the Zalesky family.¹⁸ Once it was vacant, he moved into the "house" prepared for him. Previous local accounts about Klacel's stay with the Zaleskys suggested that the outbuilding now located at the rear of the lot was constructed by Zalesky to house Klacel, but the size and plan of the structure, as well as the construction methods and materials and the information provided on fire insurance maps, do not support that assertion. Further investigation of the outbuilding indicates its construction dates to ca.1940. It appears far more likely that, despite being translated from Klacel's letter as a house (the implication being a separate, freestanding building), it was the second addition made to the Zalesky House in ca.1880 that housed the immigrants, the most famous of which was Ladimir Klacel.

The Zalesky house passed to Julia Zalesky after the death of her parents and it remained in her care through her death in 1957. In 1973 Dennis Drahos purchased the house. Like Zalesky and Klacel, the Drahos family is of Bohemian descent, the first of them having arrived in Belle Plaine by 1872. After his death in 2010, the house was purchased from the Dennis Drahos estate by his brother Daniel and his wife, Deborah Drahos, who are undertaking its historic rehabilitation.

The Second Empire Style

The Zalesky House was constructed ca.1872 on a double lot on the south side of Belle Plaine. Despite a running advertisement in the *Belle Plaine Transcript* during 1867-1868 which marketed lots in Hutton's Addition as "Desirable Location, Prices Reasonable, & Terms Made Easy," the neighborhood in which the house was built was sometimes referred to as the "wrong side of the tracks."¹⁹ Historically, the area was comprised of a variety of houses, both in scale and style, but none of the quality and beauty of the Zalesky House.

The Second Empire style was a dominant style in American residential design from 1860-1880 (although specimens are found from the 1850s into the 1890s), particularly in urban areas of the northeastern and Midwestern states. In contrast to the historicized romanticism of the Italianate and Gothic Revivals styles of that period, the Second Empire

¹⁷ Koehler History Center. Architect files and Wesley I. Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects* [Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1999], 90.

¹⁸ Stacey B. Day, *A Klacelka in a Slavic Woodland* [International Foundation for Biosocial Development and Human Health, 2002], 55.

¹⁹ *Belle Plaine Transcript*. December 25, 1867.

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style was inspired by the latest in French building design, giving it a decidedly modern appeal. The distinctive roof, named for the 17th-century French architect Francois Mansart, came back into use in France during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870), the period known as France's Second Empire from which the style takes its name. The period was characterized by a revitalization of Paris, with the 60,000 new buildings constructed showcasing French prosperity. Following design exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867, the Second Empire style spread to England and then to the United States, where Americans responded to the sophisticated style and quickly emulated the French design.

In addition to the appeal of its modern French sensibility, the boxy shape of the style's hallmark mansard roof was embraced for the practicality of the additional interior space the roof's form provided. That feature made the mansard roof popular for the renovation of earlier buildings as well as in new construction. During the 1860s and 1870s American architects commonly added the mansard to Italianate houses to provide a full extra floor rather than the low ceiling of a gable pitched roof. The additional space was particularly useful in tight urban spaces where rowhouses were a common residential building type.

In its application to American residential architecture, the Second Empire style has been described as essentially a roof form, rather than a style of house because multiple styles of the period, when topped by a mansard roof, may be identified as Second Empire style. In that manner, the term is not descriptive of the house's visual character beyond the roof form. As a result, a house in the Second Empire style may reflect a variety of period styles, the most commonly one being the Italianate.²⁰

The Second Empire style was commonly utilized in American public buildings during the Grant administration (1869-1877), earning it the moniker the General Grant style. The panic of 1873 and subsequent economic depression mark the start of the quick decline in the style's popularity.²¹

As noted, it is the mansard roof that distinguishes buildings in the Second Empire style. Residences in the style are typically a two or three story square block with a projecting central pavilion rising above the roofline of the house itself.²² The mansard roof is often sheathed in multi-colored slates or tinplates with iron cresting. Beyond the iconic mansard roof, Second Empire houses utilize details similar to the closely related Italianate style, such as a bracketed eave, arched windows with decorative hoods (although often less elaborate than those found in the Italianate), paneled frieze boards, and the details of a verandah-like porch (without a balustrade). The windows of the first floor are sometimes very tall. The style typically uses entrances with arched double doors with transom panels.²³

In the state of Iowa seventy-two residential buildings identified as Second Empire style are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Of that number, thirty are located in Dubuque and thirteen in Davenport; both of them are early settlement cities that grew quickly in response to their locations on transportation routes. Due to the early

²⁰ Gerald Foster, *American Houses: Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 2004], 262.

²¹ Lee and Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994], 242.

²² John G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945* [Nashville, TN: AASLH Press, 1981], 53.

²³ McAlester and Blumenson.

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settlement, prosperity, and size of those two cities the presence of a number of high style residences, in this case those reflecting the Second Empire style, is to be expected.²⁴

Linn County, with the county seat of Cedar Rapids being the largest city in proximity to Belle Plaine, has four National Register listed Second Empire houses (two in Marion and two in Mt. Vernon). No registered Second Empire resources of any property type are located in Benton County, although two resources have been identified and noted on the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office database. Both resources are located in Belle Plaine, the first being the Zalesky House; the second, located at 1310 10th Avenue, is a one-story, wood frame construction that stands in a deteriorated condition with a significant loss of historic integrity as it relates to design, materials, and workmanship.²⁵

The Zalesky House presents the hallmark stylistic elements that define it as a building in the Second Empire style. While the house is relatively modest in scale, its high style, early construction date, and high level of historic integrity stand the Zalesky House as the community's most significant residential resource.

Frantisek Matous (Ladimir) Klacel

Frantisek Matous (Ladimir) Klacel²⁶ was a Bohemian philosopher, scientist, journalist, botanist, and professor who espoused an idea he called *vesmernost*, meaning universality. Klacel immigrated to the United States in 1869 where, after a number of disappointing experiences in locations ranging from Chicago to Milwaukee, he came to the Zalesky family in Belle Plaine to live out the final months of his life. Klacel's occupation in the Zalesky House is documented in his own writings and the ca.1881 addition to the house was built to accommodate Klacel who lived in the care of the Zalesky family until his death in March of 1882.

Frantisek Klacel was born on April 8, 1808 in Ceska Trebova, a city in what is now the Czech Republic. In 1827 Klacel entered the Augustinian monastery at Brno (the capital of the province of Moravia) and from 1829 to 1832 he was a member of that order, studying at the Philosophical Institute in Brno. In 1833 he was ordained as a priest and in 1835, became a professor of philosophy at the Brno institute.²⁷ At this time he was publishing papers addressing the areas of humanism, patriotism, and natural sciences.²⁸ As a teacher he imparted a sense of patriotism through his lessons, a practice which brought unwanted attention from the authorities and which resulted in his removal from that teaching position. The ensuing years of political turmoil in his country found Klacel bandied about, his spirit damaged by the civil unrest that plagued the country. During this period he was occupied with a number of activities including management of the castle library at Libechov. Klacel returned to Brno in ca.1845 where he managed the monastery's

²⁴ Under the Black Hawk Treaty, Dubuque was opened for settlement by the U.S. government in 1833 and chartered in 1837, making it Iowa's oldest city. Davenport was platted in 1836. Today, Dubuque has an estimated population of 57,222 and Davenport of 101,360. In contrast, Belle Plaine, has a population of less than 3000. <http://www.cityofdubuque.org/index.aspx?NID=1060>. Accessed February 8, 2011 and <http://www.qcmemory.org/Default.aspx?PageId=223&nt=207&nt2=222>. Accessed February 8, 2011.

²⁵ State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa. Resource database accessed January 13, 2011. On-site observation December 3, 2010.

²⁶ Klacel used a number of pseudonyms, Matous being his monastic name. In the United States he went by Ladimir Klacel.

²⁷ Jan Habenicht. *History of Czechs in America* [Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, 1906], 213.

²⁸ Margaret H. Peaslee and Vitezslav Orel, "The Evolutionary Ideas of F.M. (Ladimir) Klacel, Teacher of Gregor Mendel" [University of Pittsburgh at Titusville, Titusville, PA, March 14, 2007], 152.

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experimental garden. The entrance of Gregor Mendel to the monastery and the possible influence of the elder Klacel on Mendel regarding his theories of breeding methods and genetics have been examined in some depth. Klacel's own writings are held as evidence of the development of his own ideas and theories regarding genetics, leading some to the conclusion that it was Klacel who brought together Darwin's theory of natural selection with Mendel's theories regarding hybridization in an understanding of heredity as the raw material of evolution.²⁹

In the closing months of 1848, Klacel became the publisher of the Moravian News, in which he included his own political notes addressing the origins of socialism and communism. In subsequent months he expanded his commentary to include general issues regarding nature, which was a return to his work in the experimental garden at Brno.³⁰

Frantisek Klacel is considered by some to be the first communist, while others called him a Utopian Socialist. Klacel's philosophy of Vesměnost purported that a belief in humanity as a global community with its associated obligations was a guiding element of human conduct. At its essence, Vesměnost espoused that a "deliberate universality is the goal of all love and knowledge."³¹ Klacel's teaching contrasted with the teachings of Karl Marx in that he envisioned a free Bohemia based on a romanticized view of brotherhood and the nobility of conduct based on love.

As described by Stacey B. Day, Klacel "... would have the Universe move by the breath of freethinking humanism". As an outspoken advocate of such a philosophy, Klacel was destined to live a life often misunderstood and commonly subjected to much ridicule. His method of dealing with people of all kinds and stations in life was the same, earning him contempt by some and the admiration of others.³² In his work he advocated national patriotism and he was an activist for the restoration of the Czech language, culture and sovereignty.

With the 1867 Ausgleich compromise of Austria and Hungary, which implemented a dual monarchy, Klacel must have lost all hope, leaving exile in America his only remaining option.³³ In 1869, at the invitation of Jan Barta Letovsky, Klacel boarded a ship to America. Letovsky was a journalist born in Letovice, Moravia who immigrated to Boston in 1854. In 1869 Letovsky moved to Iowa City, Iowa where he ran the newspaper *Slovan Americký*. Upon his arrival, Klacel took over the editorship of the paper, but with a dissatisfied readership, his reign was short-lived. While in Iowa City, Klacel became involved with the freethinker movement and the Union of Free Thinkers, for which he published the newsletter, *Hlas* (meaning, voice).³⁴ A break between Klacel and Jan Barta Letovsky embittered the philosopher and he set off on a series of similarly disastrous engagements. In Chicago Klacel published another journal, this known as *Svojan* (meaning, own man). During this period he also translated and published a number of scientific

²⁹ Peaslee, 155.

³⁰ City of Brno website, "Famous People." www2.bmo.cz/index.php?lan=en&nav01=2222&nav02=2220&nav03=2447&idosob... Accessed May 17, 2011.

³¹ Stacey B. Day. *A Klacelka in a Slavic Woodland* [International Foundation for Biosocial Development and Human Health, 2002], 13.

³² Ibid., 28.

³³ Ibid., 34-35.

³⁴ City of Brno website.

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handbooks.³⁵ Despite these efforts, Klacel's financial situation was dire and his arrangements in Chicago described as impoverished, with "dejection and poverty ... reflected in his sorrowing eyes."³⁶

Klacel vented his disappointment and frustration in letters to various friends. In one communication Klacel addresses his desire to publish a newspaper that serves "the needs of a cultured people, who strive after truth, righteousness, love." The letter highlights his frustration in gathering support for his philosophy when he notes, "every lofty ideal meets with derision" and indicates his feelings about his poor circumstances, "it is disheartening to have to struggle with vulgar want."³⁷

On June 7, 1881, in a letter to Matej Miksicka, Klacel speaks of an encounter with Frank Zalesky. At the time, Klacel was with Zalesky in Belle Plaine, where Zalesky offered "for the fourth time" to provide a home to the philosopher. The content of the letter makes it clear that Zalesky was well aware of Klacel's situation, both his disappointments and his poverty. It has been suggested that Zalesky offered to shelter Klacel both out of personal deference to him and due to a shame he suffered for those "free-thinking" Czechs who could not keep the teacher. Klacel describes Zalesky as a man of 30 years of age, who was from Sucha, a Freethinker, and a wealthy butcher who "loves his country." At the time of the letter, Klacel notes he had stayed with the Zalesky family for a month "because in the small house that he made ready for me are some immigrants who did not move out until a few days ago." Klacel then moved into what he had described as "the small house" where he would have space to work. His health was apparently troubling him by this time, as he notes to Miksicka that he was having trouble walking – a condition that was improving in the new climate. Further he notes, "One way or the other, I am going to die in good hands." Zalesky's longtime housekeeper, Mrs. Anna Molova, cared for the philosopher until that day.³⁸

Frantesik Matous Ladimir Klacel died in Belle Plaine, Iowa on March 17, 1882 at the age of 74. The *Atlantic Daily Telegraph* noted, "He was the greatest Bohemian scholar in this country, an able writer, and a profound thinker."³⁹ On the day of his burial, a train came from Chicago carrying many of his followers. The Cedar Rapids' community held a benefit concert on October 30, 1882 to raise funds for the erection of a monument in Klacel's memory. The benefit was held in the town's Bohemian Reading Society Hall.⁴⁰ A memorial to Klacel was also erected at the National Cemetery in Chicago.

A 1954 local news article, written by H. Roy Mosnat whose father, Jacob Mosnat, was a Bohemian immigrant and a prominent attorney in Belle Plaine at that time of Ladimir Klacel's stay with the Zalesky's, confirms that Klacel died at the Zalesky House where he had spent the final eight months of his life.⁴¹

³⁵ City of Brno website.

³⁶ Day, 53.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Habenicht, 215.

³⁹ *Atlantic Daily Telegraph*, "Telegraphic Summary," March 21, 1882, 1.

⁴⁰ *Cedar Rapids Times*, "Benefit Concert," October 26, 1882, 3.

⁴¹ Belle Plaine History Center. Vertical files. Partially cited loose news article.

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RELEVANT CULTURAL RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

At the time of the preparation of this National Register nomination, the City of Belle Plaine is in the process of a downtown revitalization project of previously untried structure, complexity, and creativity. That project includes an Intensive Level Historical and Architectural Survey and Evaluation of the Belle Plaine commercial district (completed) and the National Register nomination of the Belle Plaine Main Street Historic District, within which the Zalesky Meat Market is located. Further, the City of Belle Plaine has created a historic preservation commission and is the process of application to the Iowa Certified Local Government program. CLG designation will provide continuity between the preservation efforts now focused on the downtown and those required to address the wide variety of historic resources located community wide. Although an Iowa Site Inventory form for the Zalesky House was prepared in 1987, the information included was very limited. There is no indication that further research or documentation of the house was completed prior to the present nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

POTENTIAL FOR HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

The potential for historical archaeology was not assessed as part of the present National Register nomination. The relatively undisturbed condition of the site's rear (west) and side (north and south) lots may suggest the potential for historic archaeology. As a result, any significant excavation and/or grading should take into consideration the possibility that archaeological and/or sub-grade historical resources may remain.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This National Register nomination utilizes an array of reference resources in an attempt to create a full picture of the architectural significance and historical associations of the Frank E. Zalesky House. State Historic Preservation Office records of Iowa resources in the Second Empire style were of important use in placing the resource within the context of known residences of the style. In regard to the resource's historical associations to Frank Zalesky and the Bohemian influx to the Cedar Rapids area, Habenicht's *History of Czechs in America* was the primary resource consulted. The book was particularly important in light of the present lack of access to the archives of the National Czech-Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids. Typically, the museum would be the primary resource for information regarding that immigrant group, but the flood of 2008 wrought much damage to the facility and to its collection, which remains inaccessible at this time. The Habenicht book also provided information about Vladimir Klacel's residency at the Zalesky house, which was further supported by Stacey D. Day's *The Klacelka in a Slavic Woodland*.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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CFN-259-1116

Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherven), House, Benton County, Iowa

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House
Name of Property

Benton County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	560135	4638074
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Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

2			
---	--	--	--

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

3			
---	--	--	--

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

4			
---	--	--	--

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alexa McDowell, Architectural Historian

organization AKAY Consulting date June 30, 2011

street & number 1226 6th Street telephone 515-491-5432

city or town Boone state Iowa zip code 50036

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items - (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Daniel & Deborah Drahos

street & number 802 9th Avenue telephone 319-423-0671

city or town Belle Plaine state Iowa zip code 52208

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10

Page 20

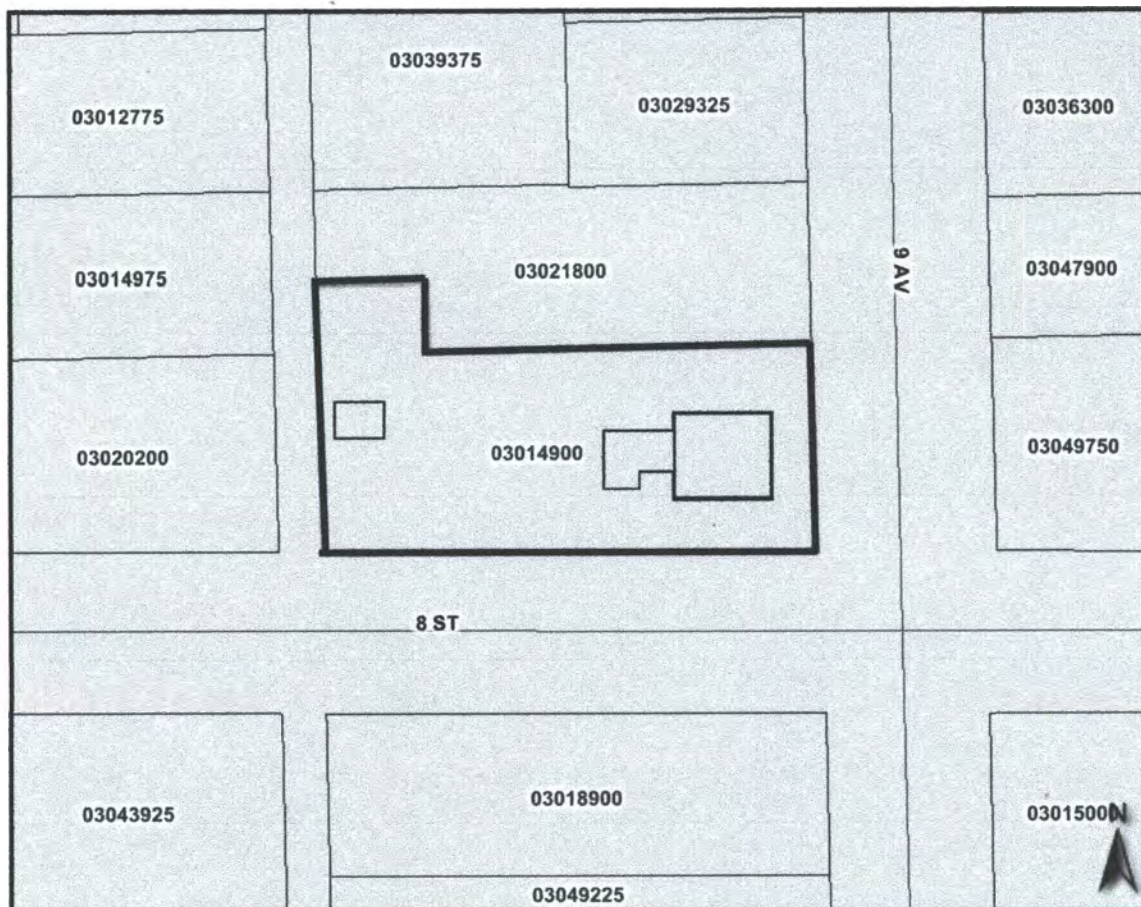
CFN-259-1116

Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

HUTTONS 2ND ADD COM 1'S NE COR LOT 7 W 140' N 26' W 40' S TO SW COR LOT 7



(Map Source: Benton County Assessor's Online Records, <http://beacon.schneidercorp.com>. Accessed 04/05/11.)

The property is outlined with the location and scale of the house and non-contributing garage approximated.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the house itself and the portion of the historical site that remains part of the present parcel.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

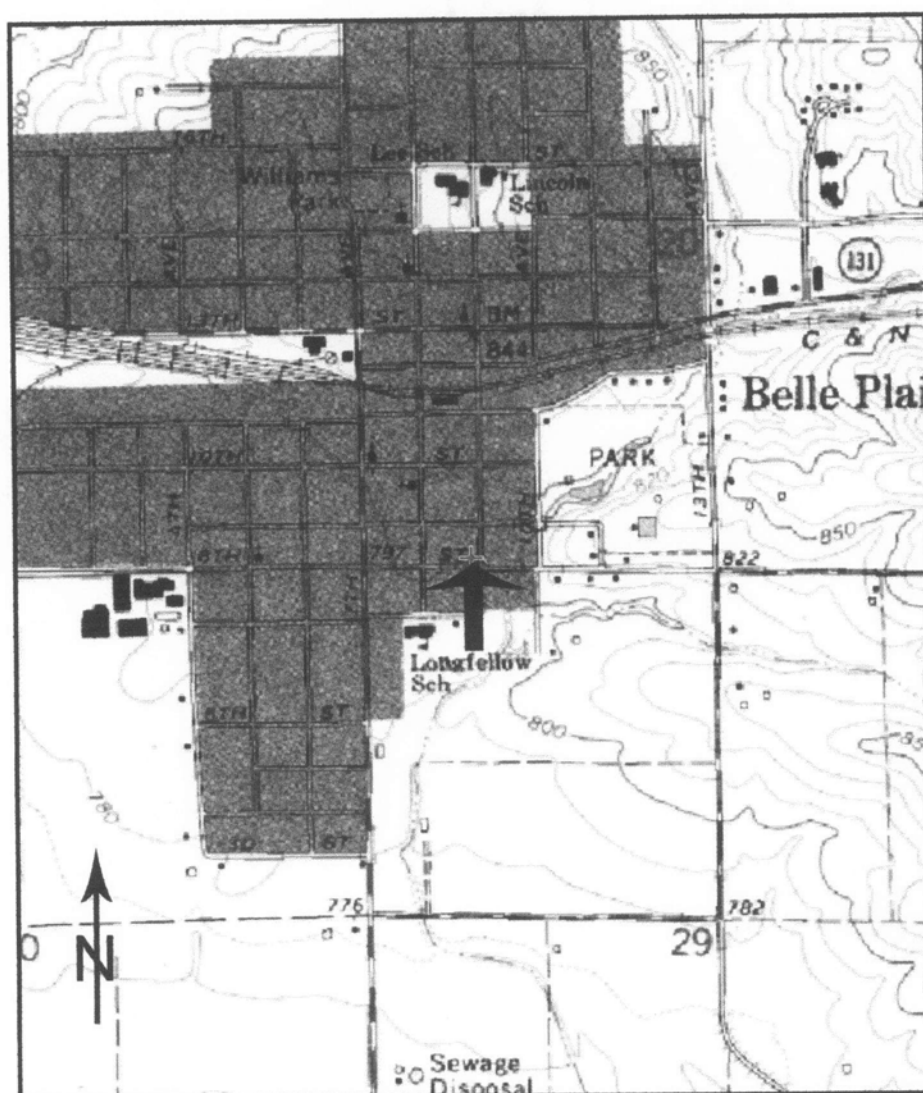
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 1. USGS 7.5 MINUTE TOPOGRAPHIC MAP – BELLE PLAINE (1968)



(SOURCE: <http://www.trails.com>. Accessed February 7, 2011.)

The location of the Zalesky House is indicated.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Chervený), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 2. AERIAL MAP – 2011



(Map Source: <http://mapquest.com>. Accessed 04/29/11.)

The location of the Zalesky House is indicated.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

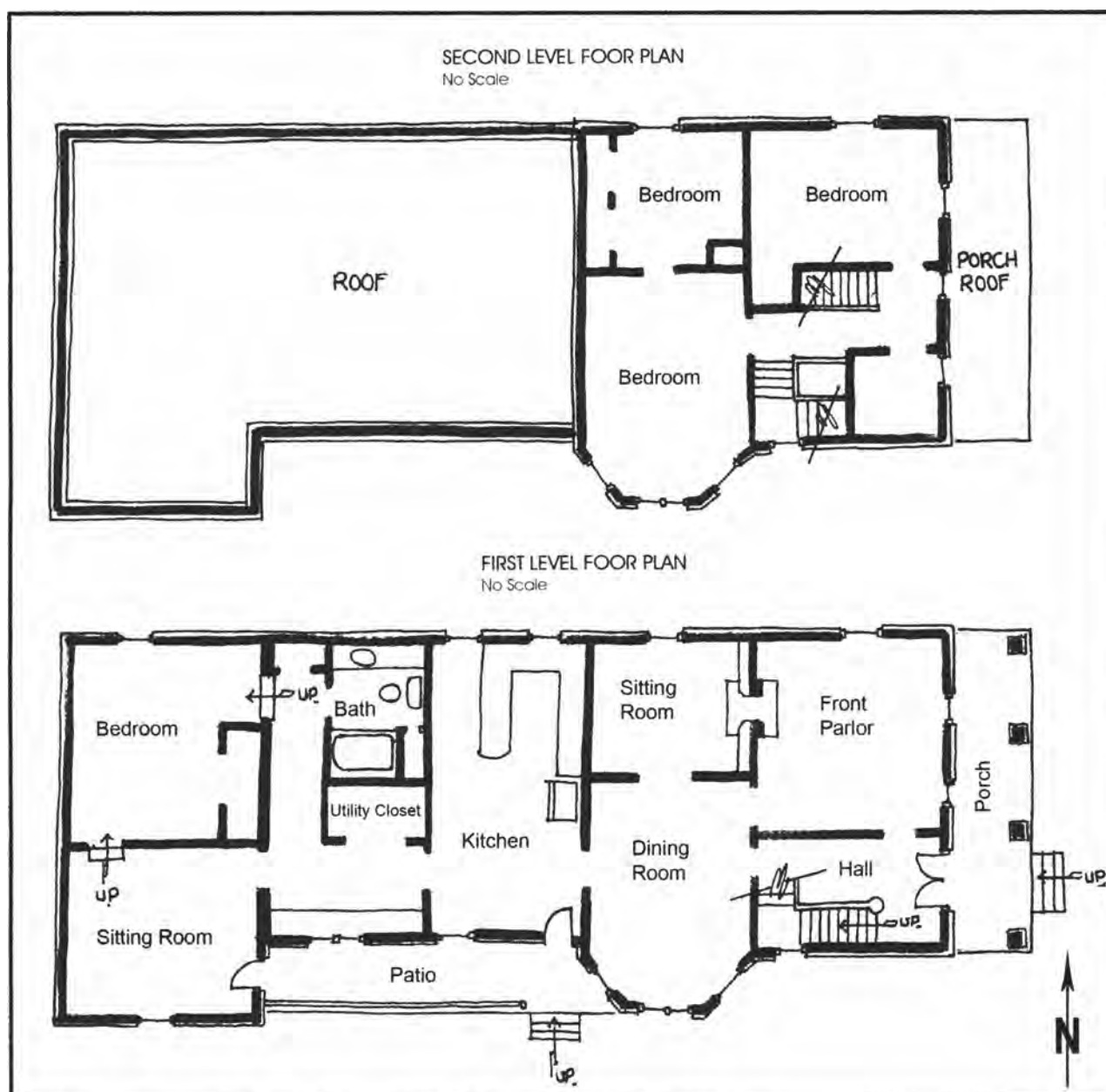
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 3. FLOOR PLANS – 2011



(SOURCE: Floor plan sketches courtesy Mills Architecture. 12/03/2010.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

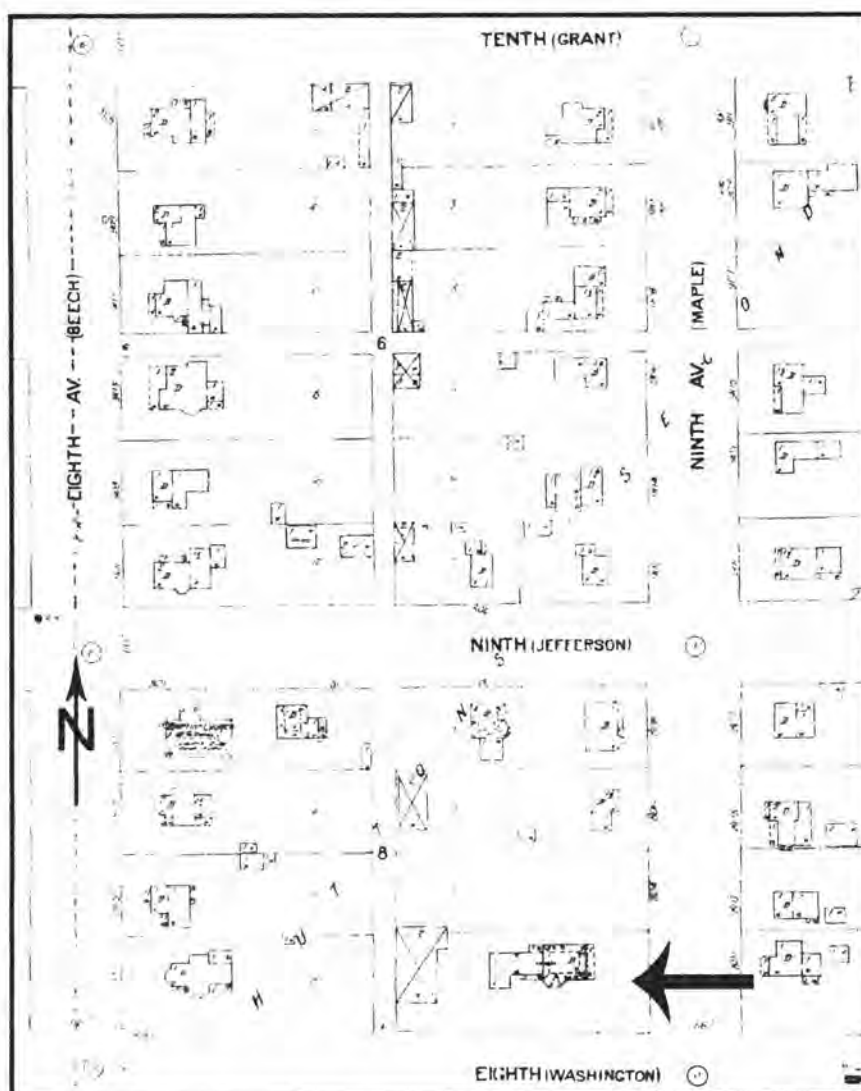
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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 4. FIRE INSURANCE MAP – 1906



(SOURCE: <http://0-sanborn.umi.com/catalog.cbpl.lib.ia.us:80/>. Accessed 09/27/11.)

The location of the Zalesky House is indicated. The 1906 fire insurance map is the first to record this portion of the community of Belle Plaine. As the map documents, the rear section of the house was in place by this time. The building noted at the rear of the lot on this map is non-extant. A garage structure currently on the site dates to ca.1940, which is outside the period of significance.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 5. HISTORIC IMAGE – ca.1881



(SOURCE: http://www.upt.pitt.edu/upt_peaslee/klacel_monuments.htm. Accessed 02/07/11.)

This image taken of Frantisek (Ladimir) Klacel (left), and Frank (Frantisek) E. Zalesky on the front porch of the Zalesky House, documents the philosopher's presence at the Zalesky home. Although unidentified, Katie Zalesky (wife of Frank) is likely one of the two women; Mrs. Anna Molova, the Zalesky's housekeeper and Klacel's caregiver, may be the other. After numerous invitations from Frank Zalesky, Klacel moved to Belle Plaine in June of 1881 where he spent the final months of his life. Klacel is buried in Belle Plaine's Oak Hill Cemetery. The image also provides a glimpse of the house's front porch and is the only known image of the Zalesky House from this period.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

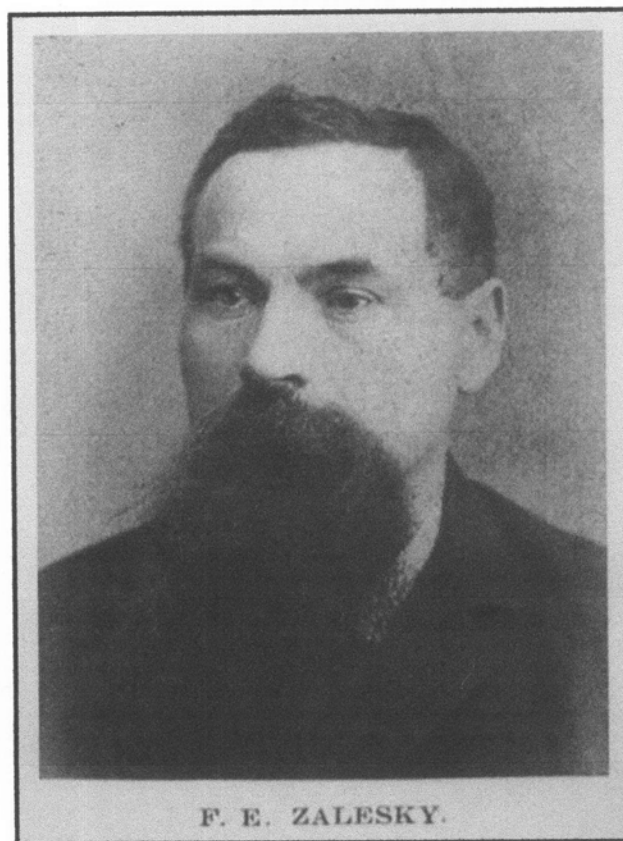
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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 6. HISTORIC IMAGE – Frank E. Zalesky - 1901



(Source: *Atlas of Benton County, Iowa*, 1901.)

Frank E. Zalesky, a native of Sucha in what is now the Czech Republic, was a successful businessman and community leader in Belle Plaine from his arrival in 1871 until his death in 1929.

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National Park Service

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 7. HISTORIC IMAGE – Zalesky Meat Market – 1895



2320 Twelve Street, Belle Plaine, Iowa.

(SOURCE: Belle Plaine Area Museum)

The location of Zalesky's meat market is indicated. The block of buildings in which the store was located was constructed by December of 1894, replacing that lost in the fire in July of that same year. The building remains today and is a contributing resource to the Belle Plaine Main Street Historic District.

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Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House, Benton County, Iowa

Figure 8. HISTORIC ADVERTISEMENT – Zalesky Meat Market – 1897



(SOURCE: Belle Plaine Biographical Directory, 1897)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveny), House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Benton

DATE RECEIVED: 2/24/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/19/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/03/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/11/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000191

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4.10.12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



IA-Benton County-Zalesky House-0001

1. Context: looking to the northeast
across 8th Street



IA-BentonCounty-ZaleskyHouse-0002

2. Exterior: east (facade) & south
elevations, looking northwest



I4-BentonCounty-ZaleskyHouse-2003

3. Exterior: East (facade), looking west



IA- Benton County- Zalesky House- 0004

4. Exterior: west & north elevations,
looking southeast



IA-Benton County-Zalesky House-0005

5. Exterior: addition, south elevation,
looking north



IA - Benton County - Zalesky house - 0006

6. Exterior: Detail, South elevation,
upper bay & mansard roof



IA-Benton County-Zalcsky House-0007

7. Interior: front hallway (first floor),
looking east toward main entrance



IA-Benton County-Zalesky House-0008
8. Interior: first floor, front hallway &
staircase, looking west



IA-Benton County-Zaleskythorse-0009

9. Interior: first floor, front parlor,
looking northwest



IA - Benton County - Zalesky House - 0010
10. Interior: first floor, dining room,
looking southwest toward bay



IA - Benton County - Zalesky House - 0011

11. Interior: first floor, dining room,
looking northwest



IA - Benton County - Zalesky House - 2012
12. Interior: first floor, kitchen,
looking east



IA-Benton County-Zalesky House-0013

13. Interior: rear addition, bedroom,
looking northeast



IA - Benton County - Zalesky Horse - 0014
14. Interior: second floor, bedroom,
looking southwest toward bay

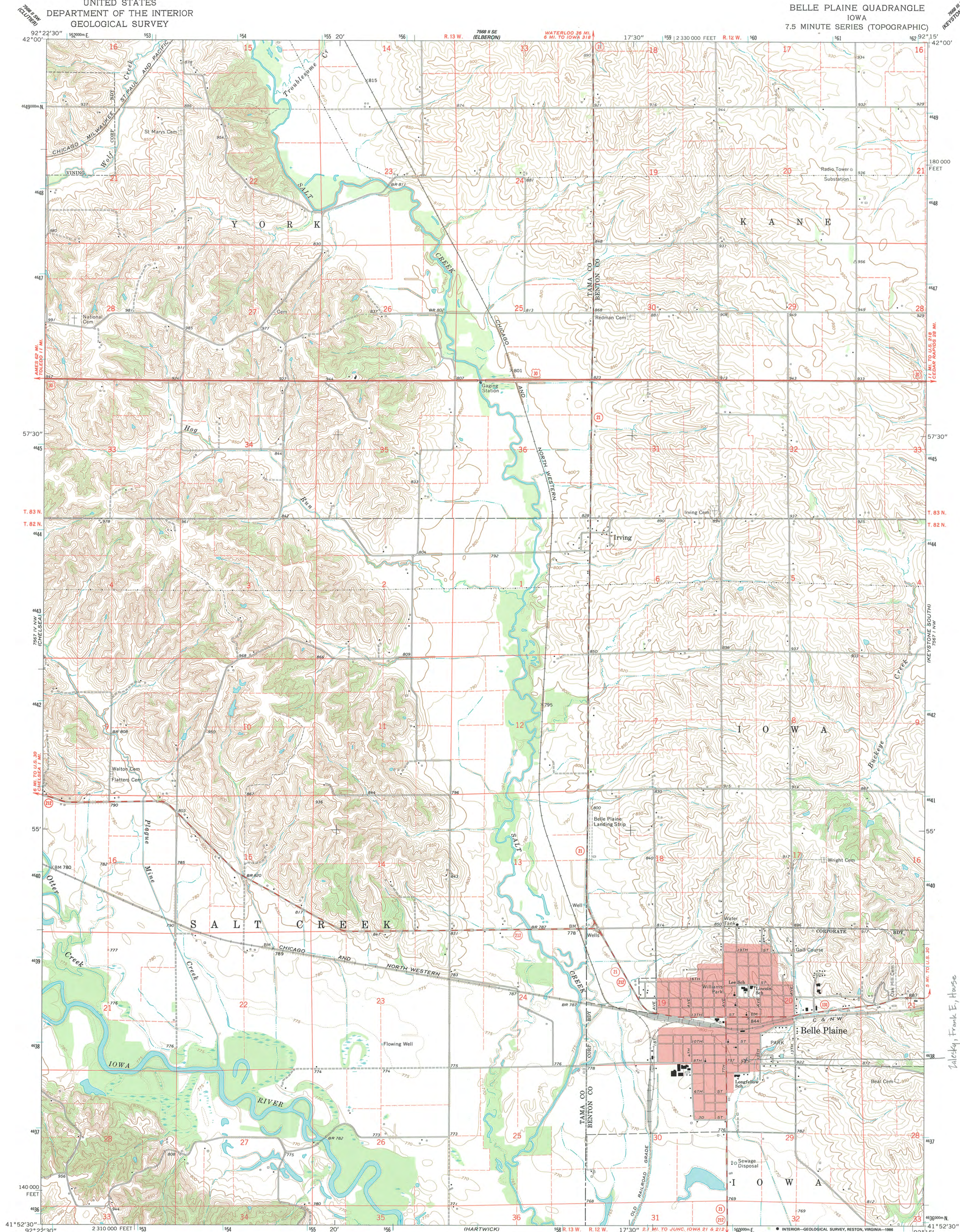


IA - Benton County - Zalesky House - 0015

15. View of ca. 1940 garage looking
northeast

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

BELLE PLAINE QUADRANGLE
IOWA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

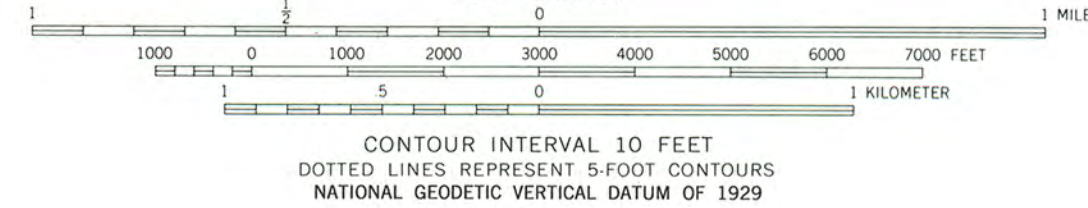
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1968

Polycyclic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on Iowa coordinate system, north zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 4 meters north and 15 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
U. S. Route	State Route

BELLE PLAINE, IOWA
41092-H3-TF-024
1968

DMA 7567 IV NE-SERIES V876

UTM Reference: 15/560135 4638074

Salecky, Frank E., Horse
Belle Plaine
Benton County, Iowa

MAY 02 2011

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MARY TIFFANY COWNIE, DIRECTOR

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR



STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY of
IOWA

JEROME THOMPSON
ADMINISTRATOR



MATTHEW HARRIS
ADMINISTRATOR

600 E. LOCUST
DES MOINES, IOWA
50319

T. (515) 281-5111
F. (515) 282-0502

CULTURALAFFAIRS.ORG

February 21, 2012

Carol Shull, Chief
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, N.W.-- 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination(s) are enclosed for your review and listed if acceptable.

- Zalesky, Frank E. and Katie (Cherveney), House, 802 9th Avenue, Belle Plaine, Benton County, Iowa

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill, Manager
National Register and Tax Incentive Programs